Summary of SALT Transcription Conventions

1. Transcript Format. Each entry begins with one of the following symbols. If an entry is longer than one line, continue it on the next line.

$ Identifies the speakers in the transcript; always the first line of the transcript.
Example: $ Child, Examiner

C   Child/Client utterance. The actual character used depends on the $ speaker line.

E   Examiner utterance. The actual character used depends on the $ speaker line.

+   Typically used for identifying information such as name, age, and context.
Example of current age: + CA: 5;7

-    Time marker.
Example of two-minute marker: - 2:00

:   Pause between utterances of different speakers.
Example of five-second pause: : :05

;   Pause between utterances of same speaker.
Example of three-second pause: ; :03

=   Comment line. This information is not analyzed in any way, but is used for transcriber comments.

2. End of Utterance Punctuation. Every utterance must end with one of these six punctuation symbols.

.   Statement, comment. Do not use a period for abbreviations.

!   Surprise, exclamation.

?   Question.

~   Intonation prompt. Example:
E And then you have to~

^   Interrupted utterance. The speaker is interrupted and does not complete his/her thought/utterance.

>   Abandoned utterance. The speaker does not complete his/her thought/utterance but has not been interrupted.

3. { } Comments within an utterance. Example: C Lookit {C points to box}.
Nonverbal utterances of communicative intent are placed in braces. Example: C {nods}.

4. Unintelligible Segments. X is used to mark unintelligible sections of an utterance. Use X for an unintelligible word, XX for an unintelligible segment of unspecified length, and XXX for an unintelligible utterance.
Example 1: C He XX today.   Example 2: C XXX.

5. Bound Morphemes. Words which contain a slash "/" indicate that the word is contracted, conjugated, inflected, or pluralized in a regular manner. The root word is entered in its conventional spelling followed by a slash "/" and then the bound morpheme.

English and Spanish

/S   Plural. Words that end in "s" but represent one entity are not slashed.
Examples: kitten/s, baby/s, pants, rana/s, feliz/s, flor/s
Irregular plurals are not marked, but are typed as spelled, e.g., leaves, mice, geese, lives, wolves.

English only

/Z   Possessive inflection.
Examples: dad/z, Mary/z. Do not mark possessive pronouns, e.g., his, hers, ours, yours.

/S/Z Plural and Possessive. Example: baby/s/z

/ED   Past tense. Predicate adjectives are not slashed.
Examples: love/ed, die/ed, was tired, is bored

/3S   3rd Person Singular verb form. Irregular forms are not slashed.
Examples: go/3s, tell/3s, does

/ING Verb inflection. The gerund use of the verb form is not slashed.
Examples: go/ing, run/ing, went swimming

/N'T, /'T   Negative contractions. Irregular forms are not slashed
Examples: can/'t, does/n't, won't

/'LL, /'M, /'D, /'RE, /'S, /'VE   Contractible verb forms.
Examples: I/'ll, I/'m, I/'d, we/'re, he/'s, we/'ve

The following contractions were marked in the Expository and Persuasion database samples:
/H'S, /D'S, /D'D, /'US → has, does, did, us.
> Examples: He/h's been sick. What/d's he do for a living? Why/d'd the boy look for the frog? Let/'us go. In all other reference databases "let's" was not marked and the non-standard contracted forms were transcribed as two words, e.g., He has, What does.

6. Bound Pronominal Clitics (Spanish). Pronominal clitics may be either bound or unbound. When bound, they are preceded by a plus sign. Examples: gritándo+le, déja+lo, dá+me+lo

7. Mazes. Filled pauses, false starts, repetitions, and reformulations.
( )   Surrounds the words/part-words that fall into these categories.
Example: C And (then um) then (h*) he left.

8. Omissions. Partial words, omitted words, omitted bound morphemes, and omitted pronominal clitics are denoted by an asterisk (*).
*   Following one or more letters this indicates that a word was started but left unfinished. Example: C I (w* w*) want it.
*   Preceding a word indicates that an obligatory word was omitted.
Example: C Give it *to me.
/*   Following a slash the * is then followed by the bound morpheme which was omitted, indicating the omission of an obligatory bound morpheme.
Example: C The car go/*3s fast.
+*   Following a plus sign the * is then followed by the Spanish clitic which was omitted, indicating the omission of an obligatory pronominal clitic.
Example: C Él está gritándo+*le a la rana.

9. Overlapping Speech. When both speakers are speaking at the same time, the words or silences that occur at the same time are surrounded by angle brackets < >.
Example 1: C I want you to do it < > for me.   Example 2: C Can I have that <one>?
     E <Ok>.   E <Uhhuh>.

10. Linked words. The underscore "_" is used to link multiple words so they are treated as a single word. Examples include titles of movies and books, compound words, proper names, and words or phrases repeated multiple times.

11. Root identification. The vertical bar "|" is used to identify the root word.
English uses: The root words of irregular verb forms such as "went" or "flew" are not identified.
Linked words repeated for emphasis.
Example: C The boy ran very very_very|very fast.
Non-words used in error.
Example: C He goed|go[EO:went] by hisself|himself[EW:himself].
Shortened words.
Example: C He was sad cuz|because they left.
Spanish uses:
Inflected word forms.
Example: C Había|haber una vez un niño que tenía|tener una rana.
Diminutives.
Example: C El perrito|perro tumbó|tumbar las abeja/s.
Linked words repeated for emphasis.
Example: C Dijeron rana rana_rana|rana dónde estás.
Non-words used in error.

12. Sound Effects and Idiosyncratic Forms %. The percent sign is used to identify sound effects which are essential to the meaning or structure of the utterance. Non-essential sound effects are entered as comments. Strings of the same sound are linked together.
Example 1: C The dog went %woof_woof.   Example 2: C The dog barked {woof woof}.
The percent sign is also used to identify idiosyncratic forms used by very young children. These are immature productions which are consistent in reference to an object, person, or situation.
Example 1: C See %vroom {car}.   Example 2: C My %coopa {cookie}.

13. Spelling Conventions.

- Filled pause words: AH, EH, ER, HM, HMM, UH, UM, MM, and any word with the code [FP]
- Yes words: OK, AHA, MHM, UHHUH (*English & Spanish*)
  YEAH, YEP, YES (*English only*)
  SÍ (*Spanish only*)
- No words: NO, AHAH, MHMH, UHUH (*English & Spanish*)
  NAH, NOPE (*English only*)
- Numbers (*examples*): 21 or TWENTYONE, 17 or DIECISIETE
- Reflexive vs Non-reflexive pronouns (Spanish only)
  The following pronouns can be used both reflexively and non-reflexively: ME, TE, SE, OS, NOS. Attach the code [X] when used reflexively.
  Examples: C El niño se[X] fue con el perro. C El perro me ayudó a conseguir la rana.
- Other English spellings:

AIN'T	GOTTA (*got to*)	LIKETA	OURS	USETA
ATTA	HMM	LOOKIT	OH, OOH	OUGHTA
BETCHA	HAFTA	NOONE	SPOSTA	WANNA
DON'T	HUH	NOPE	TRYNTA	WHATCHA
GONNA	LET'S	OOP, OOPS, OOPSY	UHOH	YOURS

14. [ ] Codes. Codes are used to mark words or utterances. Codes are placed in brackets [ ] and cannot contain blank spaces.
Codes used to mark words are inserted at the end of a word with no intervening spaces between the code and the word.

a) Codes used to mark errors in the reference database samples:

[EO:__] used to mark overgeneralization errors.	C He falled|fall[EO:fell].
[EW:__] used to mark other word-level errors.	C He were[EW:was] look/ing.
[EW] used to mark extraneous words.	C And then the boy is a[EW] sleep/ing.
[EU] used to mark utterance-level errors.	C And they came to stop/ed [EU].
[FP] used to mark non-standard filled pause words.	C The dog (um like[FP]) fell down.

b) Other codes used in the Bilingual S/E reference database samples:

[F] used to mark fragments due to utterance segmentation with modified communication units.	C The gopher look/ed out of the hole. C and bit the boy [F].
[CS] used to mark code-switched words.	C The dog fell from la[CS] ventana[CS].
[WO] used to mark utterances with non-standard word order.	C And then fell down the dog and the boy [WO].
[I] used to mark vocabulary provided by the examiner (imitated word).	C And then the :05 <> owl[I] scare/ed him. E <Owl>.
[X] used to mark Spanish reflexive pronouns.	C El niño se[X] fue con el perro.